

40. "SBCC District 'Interested' in Property Switch Project," SBNP, 20 September 1979; "Authority May Buy School Site," SBNP, 20 May 1980; "Board of Education Seeks Meeting on Garfield Future," SBNP, 24 May 1980.

41. "Cottage Hospital, City of Santa Barbara, December 1980," Computer Highlight Analysis (Long Beach, California: Western View Point Research, Inc.). Five hundred people were polled in this study, one hundred from the Cottage Hospital and Oak Park areas and four hundred from other parts of the city. 82 percent of those questioned had a positive response to Cottage Hospital (Table 17). 65.4 percent agreed that larger hospitals provided more advanced medical care (Table 26). 88 percent agreed that self-supporting hospitals should have the opportunity to expand and improve (Table 32). Overall, 60 percent thought it was good to live near a hospital, while 70 percent of the residents in the neighborhood thought it was good to live near the hospital. Older residents also agreed - 56.9 percent - but not as heartily (Table 33).

42. Interview with Mrs. Doris McCarthy, 2410 Castillo Street, 26 March 1981; Interview with Mr. and Mrs. Eugene Martin, 1926 Castillo Street, 27 March 1981. The Martins have lived in the same house for sixty-five years.

8. The Eastside

Mary Titcomb

As a city grows, established neighborhoods may be disrupted by freeways, absorbed by expanding commercial sectors, changed by newcomers, and abandoned by long-time residents. Some neighborhoods disappear completely; others remain residential areas but become more densely populated as more homes and apartments are built. Clearly, neighborhoods are fundamental building blocks of a city and its history. This chapter will trace the social and physical evolution of a portion of Santa Barbara's Eastside. It will tell of a working class neighborhood in a growing California town, describing how the residents have contributed to and been affected by decisions about that neighborhood and its future.

Bordered on the west by the stores, restaurants and small businesses on Milpas Street and on the east by the foothills of the Riviera, the Eastside is an unpretentious family neighborhood. Sycamore Creek winds through the lower section of the neighborhood, where trees shade

-
- THE
EASTSIDE
1. Sunflower
 2. Eastside Park and Gardens
 3. Eastside
 4. Franklin
 5. Franklin

the houses and hide the mobile home parks. Sunflower Park, on Mason Street, has swings, slides, and jungle gyms for children, and a few streets away, the Eastside Neighborhood Park is equipped with picnic tables and barbecue grills for family outings. Behind the park are the Yanonali Gardens, where Eastside residents can raise their own vegetables. Franklin Elementary School, Franklin Community Center, and the Eastside Library sit in the center of the Eastside, surrounded by a neighborhood of well-cared-for, small frame and stucco homes. As in all neighborhoods, some homes need a fresh coat of paint and a weekend of yardwork, but these are the exception. Toward the freeway, apartments and mobile home parks outnumber the homes, which often conceal small rental units that have been added in back. There are always people outdoors: teenagers working on cars, children riding bikes, mothers minding their babies, and older people tending their gardens. An afternoon drive through the area reveals an active, family neighborhood.

It is a neighborhood, however, with unseen problems. It is a neighborhood with an unattractive reputation. Put tactfully by a Franklin parent, "This area is known for its rowdiness and lack of discipline."¹ One resident complained that he only learns about his neighbors in the Santa Barbara News-Press reports on crime.² Stories of robberies and vandalism circulate around the community, and residents express fear of the "gangs of kids" that roam about the neighborhood.³ The "beware of dog" signs on the fences that surround many small

homes and the grafitti on the walls are the visible signs of tension on the Eastside.

It is also a neighborhood of people who cannot afford to live anywhere else. Residents are tied to their houses and apartments for economic reasons: It is rarely possible to buy another home in today's market, and even for renters, especially those with children, there is little else in their price range in Santa Barbara. For those who might prefer to live elsewhere, there are few options.

This picture of the Eastside is quite different from the one that would have been drawn fifty years ago. The neighborhood shared in the citywide population boom of the 1920s. To accommodate the growing number of students a new Franklin School was built, replacing the old school, which dated from the turn of the century. It opened in 1924 with 377 students enrolled.⁴ By 1930 the lots toward Salinas Street, on the east, were filled with rather new, small single-family dwellings, though toward Milpas Street, on the west, the neighborhood was sparsely settled. Alongside the recently-built structures stood some houses from an earlier period. The Short family's Victorian-style home, owned by the proprietor of Short's Bakery, stood on Voluntario Street in the middle of a walnut grove. Down the street was another older two-story house which was slightly unkempt; the wooden fence surrounding it might have collapsed without the support of overgrown vines. Vegetable gardens and the Short's walnut trees covered much of the lower portion of the neighborhood.⁵

Several features attracted working people with families to the Eastside in the 1920s. It had lots suitable for simple homes, and an established elementary school. Small corner groceries and Jordano's, a large grocery and dry goods store on Milpas Street, made shopping convenient, and a trip to State Street was never a problem because the streetcar that went downtown stopped at the corner of Haley and Milpas.⁶ For the chauffeurs, gardeners, and caretakers who worked on the estates in Montecito, the Eastside was a particularly convenient place to



Small family-owned grocery stores were common on the Eastside. The Santos' grocery store at 1134 Carpinteria Street was in business from about 1925 to 1931. It was owned by Portuguese immigrants who lived on the adjacent property.

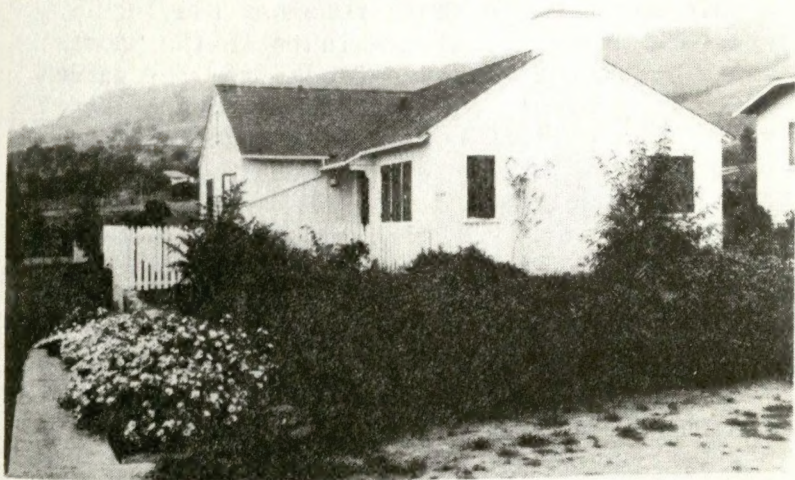
(Courtesy Mary Louise Days)

live.⁷ One neighborhood resident of the 1920s, for example, was Peter Davidson, a contractor who worked in Montecito and the Upper Eastside, another affluent residential area. Like many other newcomers, he built his own home.⁸ A few people owned small businesses, but most of those who lived in the neighborhood were skilled, unskilled, or domestic workers.⁹

Among the early settlers of the Eastside were a number of Italian immigrants.¹⁰ Indeed, in 1930 six out of the eleven homes on the 100 block of South Voluntario Street were occupied by Italians, including Santo Bortolazzo, Giovaccino Costanuni, Giovanni Ziliotto, and Lorenzo Forner and their families.¹¹ Lorenzo Forner came to Santa Barbara because he had heard there was work and pleasant weather here. Forner found a gardening job in Montecito like many other Italians, bought a house on Voluntario Street, and then sent for his fiancée in Italy. Italian was, in fact, the predominant language of the southwestern section of the neighborhood. Although the second generation learned English, few of the immigrants mastered the new language. On Sundays, the men gathered at a bar on Voluntario and Cacique Streets to play cards and bocci ball, while the women chatted in their homes and the children played their own games.¹²

Overall, the Eastside was ethnically mixed. Not only Italians, but Portuguese, Japanese, Filipinos, and other immigrant families lived there. The Tenosos, a Filipino immigrant family on Montecito Street, had little trouble finding

work, but experienced problems locating a place to live. Pete Tenoso remembers that the Eastside was one of the few neighborhoods where his family could buy a home, due to racial discrimination.¹³ Blacks also experienced housing discrimination, and while Filipinos were accepted near Franklin School, blacks were not. One young black couple bought land on Elizabeth Street in the 1920s to build a home. They were then the only blacks on the street, and their neighbors tried unsuccessfully to buy them out.¹⁴ In 1930 the Eastside was culturally heterogeneous,



This four-room house at 1117 East Cota was awarded first prize in Santa Barbara's Small House Competition in 1926. Designed by a former owner, the house was worth about \$3,250 when it won the contest. (Courtesy Special Collections, University of California, Santa Barbara)

yet Mexican-Americans, the largest of Santa Barbara's ethnic groups, were underrepresented in the neighborhood. The 1929-30 City Directory listed only three Spanish-surnamed households between 300 South and 400 North Voluntario Street.¹⁵ At that time most Mexican immigrants lived just west of Milpas in the Lower Eastside barrio. Indeed, to a resident of that neighborhood, the Eastside appeared wealthier than, and quite separate from her own.¹⁶

For the children of the Eastside in the 1920s and 1930s, the neighborhood was a wonderful playground. Although the area had no parks, people who grew up there remember playing in Sycamore Creek, picking walnuts in the Shorts' grove, eating vegetables fresh from the garden, and having plenty of other children to play with. The big old home with the creaky fence on Voluntario Street was haunted, as far as the children were concerned. The elderly woman who lived there went to bed early, so that at night the house was dark, providing an ideal setting for children with active imaginations.¹⁷ At Franklin School Eastside children came into contact with other young people from the low-income neighborhood across Milpas as well as from the Riviera. In junior high and high school they became acquainted with classmates from all over town. In a community the size of Santa Barbara, residents shopped at the same stores and attended the same schools; life for most Eastsiders did not center simply around the neighborhood.

For parents, life was hard work. Throughout the Depression families labored longer and

harder to maintain a simple lifestyle. In those years transportation was a minor expense; people rarely had to travel far. Recreation did not cost much; young people went to dances at the Recreation Center downtown, to the movies, or to the beach.¹⁸ Skilled and even unskilled laborers could afford to buy or build homes. On Voluntario Street, 58 percent of the residents were homeowners in 1930.¹⁹ (According to the 1930 census, 43.9 percent of Santa Barbara's families owned their own homes.)²⁰ Perhaps one casualty of the Depression was a decline in home ownership on the Eastside, for in 1940 only 31.6 percent of homes on Voluntario Street were owner-occupied.²¹

Between 1930 and 1950 the appearance of the Eastside changed gradually, and the lifestyle of its residents only modestly. By 1940 more people were employed on Milpas Street, as it developed into a business center. Manuel Jimenez owned a fruit store on 314 North Milpas, and Geno Forner had a gas station nearby. Jordano's and G & M Market hired neighborhood residents. Others worked at garages, or for Southern California Edison, local restaurants, the City Parks Department, and the school district. Fewer residents worked in Montecito, as more of them found jobs within the city's boundaries. Yet over the years the Eastside's occupational structure did not change; it remained a working class neighborhood.²²

World War II, however, brought disruptions, as many of the city's young men joined the service. When the war ended, they returned home,

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY

and many veterans from the nearby bases chose to settle in Santa Barbara. This influx of new residents posed problems, for there were too many people and not enough homes. The situation was complicated by a war-induced shortage of building supplies, which slowed the construction of new housing.²³ Despite the shortage, building increased dramatically. Between 1945 and 1950, 2,345 dwelling units were constructed in the city.²⁴ However, the limited supply and the increased demand for homes worked together to drive prices up. The News-Press reported in February 1948 that, while in 1939 it had cost \$6,000 to build a six-room frame home, in 1948 the same house would cost \$13,250.²⁵ A veteran who settled on the Eastside in the postwar years remembers finding little available in the town with payments of less than fifty dollars a month, which to a young carpenter seemed at that time quite high.²⁶ A 1948 housing report made by the Citizens Advisory Council summed up the postwar housing situation in dramatic terms:

All in all . . . the lack of adequate satisfactory and sufficient housing in Santa Barbara has assumed critical proportions. Actually it is the most pressing problem in the city at the present time. Unless it is relieved and solved the very foundation of the city will be weakened to a point bordering below the precarious.

The report continued:

It is not difficult to understand wherein lies the crux of Santa

Barbara's housing problem. It is in a lack of new rental units and new homes for sale at prices people can afford. . . .²⁷

The new attention directed toward housing also drew attention to the deplorable living conditions of some Santa Barbarans. The outcry over sub-standard housing focused on the area west of Milpas Street -- the lower Eastside -- where many families lived in shacks that the Health Department deemed uninhabitable.²⁸ The Eastside's older homes were not among the inadequate dwellings listed in the newspaper and official reports, yet by the late 1940s, it was being suggested that older homes, such as those in the neighborhood, were not a wise investment.²⁹

For various reasons, some long-time residents moved out of the neighborhood during the 1940s and 1950s in a gradual migration that followed little pattern. Some went to Goleta, which was exploding with new growth, while others moved to the Mesa or toward the foothills of the Riviera. At the same time, people from other neighborhoods east of State Street began moving into the Franklin neighborhood, either from just west of Milpas or from the area around Santa Barbara High School.³⁰ With this movement, the neighborhood began to change ethnically, for Hispanics were now becoming more numerous in the area. In 1951, the city directory listed only four Hispanic households on Voluntario Street, but by 1960 it showed twenty-five. More blacks also settled in the area. Many of the minority residents moved from west of Milpas, as commercial and light

industrial expansion transformed that section from a residential neighborhood into a business district.³¹ As their old neighborhood disappeared, Santa Barbara's poorer citizens searched for new homes.

In the 1950s construction on the Eastside increased. The Short family moved from their home on Voluntario Street, the lot was subdivided, and small homes replaced the old Victorian structure and the walnut grove. One resident described the new structures as "modernistic wooden houses with lots of angles," which the neighborhood people called "chicken coops."³² Homes were built on vacant lots, or were moved to the neighborhood from other parts of town.³³ As in the 1920s, Franklin School felt the pressure of the increasing population in the Eastside and surrounding neighborhoods. In 1957 portable classrooms were used, since the school could not house its 818 students in the existing buildings. In 1959, Cleveland School opened nearby, at 123 Alameda Padre Serra, relieving the overcrowding at Franklin.³⁴

In addition to the commercial expansion of the 1940s and 1950s, the construction of the new freeway pushed Santa Barbarans into new areas. Between 1944 and 1958, homes were moved or demolished and families relocated to make way for the highway.³⁵ Some Eastside residents credit the new highway with cutting down the heavy traffic on the old state route, along Milpas to East Gutierrez Street.³⁶ Mary Ortega, a long-time resident of the neighborhood west of Milpas, however, blames the highway for

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY

destroying the Mexican community life on the Lower Eastside. When 101 went through, she said, it sliced the neighborhood apart, scattering the people throughout the South Coast.³⁷

In October 1954, protests arose concerning the planned overpass at Milpas and 101. At a meeting of sixty people, the Eastside Improvement Association and Milpas Merchants Association voted to request that the City Council delay approving the plans. This early effort at community organization was unable to alter the project. The Eastside Association finally lent its support to the plan in January 1955.³⁸

As open space in the Eastside was threatened by new construction, neighborhood residents began to lobby for a park. In January 1951, a group of Milpas Street property owners proposed that the city buy land for that purpose, and the following month Mayor Norris Montgomery appointed a citizens' committee to look into the matter.³⁹ By 1954, the neighborhood had its first park, a small tract of unimproved land near Franklin School. In March of that year the president of the Franklin PTA described the impact of the new park, saying, "The whole school area has been transformed vividly from its squalid condition a year ago."⁴⁰ However, many felt that the school itself was in great need of physical improvement. The secretary of the PTA wrote the mayor and council pointing to the inadequacies of Franklin School and suggesting that the park land be developed to make the area a center of community activity:

Probably the greatest need is to have some kind of community building which could serve many uses. . . . The school is overcrowded and the facilities are most unsatisfactory. We could promise cooperation in the setting up of a community building to the extent of enlisting the aid of service clubs for financing and interested parents as work crews. We would like to have the remaining land seeded with grass and are looking forward to picnic tables and barbecue pits.⁴¹

This proposal was supported and expanded by the Park Commission, which in August 1954 submitted to the City Council a plan for complete landscaping, a wading pool, a children's playground, a large, lighted play area, a field house, restrooms, and an equipment shed, at a cost of \$24,000. When the Council considered the project in October, it whittled down the plan considerably, and ultimately approved only \$800 for planting a lawn and installing a watering system.⁴² The lack of interest in building a complete Eastside park was matched by negligence in maintaining the small plot of land. In February of 1958, thirty-nine neighborhood residents submitted a petition to the City Council and mayor complaining that the park was "over-run with weeds and its unsightly appearance was not in keeping with the improved character of the neighborhood."⁴³ The concern about a park, a community building, and the inadequate facilities at Franklin School

lingered among Eastside residents and would resurface in the 1960s.

The growth of the Eastside in the 1950s was modest compared to what was happening in other parts of the South Coast. In February 1957 the News-Press listed both the upper and lower Eastside as areas in which few homes were bought and sold. Because of this fact, prices in the neighborhood increased less than in other parts of the city.⁴⁴ There was, however, potential for growth, since most of the Eastside was zoned to allow duplexes and its most southerly section toward Highway 101 was zoned for multiple dwellings. A small part of the Eastside near the freeway was gradually rezoned for mobile homes. For example, in January 1950 a property owner requested that the zoning of 1230 East Cacique Street be changed to permit the establishment of a mobile home park "designed to attract retired visitors and the higher type of



Although much of the Eastside has few trees, they line Punta Gorda Street near Sycamore Creek where mobile homes filled in the open space after 1950.

tourists." Further south, on Punta Gorda Street, another mobile home park was added, replacing an old farm.⁴⁵

In the 1960s the neighborhood started to realize its potential for growth. Building activity increased as owners added rental units behind their homes and converted garages into dwellings, and apartments were built toward the freeway. People poured into the Eastside. In 1960 only eight households on Voluntario occupied multiple-family dwellings, but by 1970 the number had increased to fifty-one. In fact, the total number of households on the street grew from 108 to 153, a forty-two percent increase.⁴⁶ Apartment construction occurred only in the southern end of the neighborhood; the rest of the Eastside consisted of single-family homes some with small rental units added. The pattern of growth reflected no changes in zoning regulations, which had remained essentially the same since at least 1930.

As apartments were built, the atmosphere in the lower end of the neighborhood changed. In former times, Indio Muerto Street near Sycamore Creek had had an eerie appearance when the fog settled among the trees, but as apartments were built, this forbidding air disappeared. The apartments drew even more children to the area; the southern section of the Eastside became overrun with children.

While the region toward the freeway became more densely populated, new residents also moved into the old homes at the northern end of the

Eastside. One family of five, for example, moved from an apartment on the Lower Eastside to a rented single-family home on Indio Muerto Street in the 1950s. When the rent was raised, they decided to move but wanted to stay within the Franklin School area. In 1963, therefore, they bought a home considerably to the north, on the 1300 block of East Haley Street, where the atmosphere differed greatly from Indio Muerto. Few families lived on Haley, which was dominated by retired people, many of them Italians who had been in the neighborhood for years. However, as the older generation passed away, young working class families moved in.⁴⁷

Some of the changes in the neighborhood incurred opposition. In 1963 a private company known as ROME, Inc. (Residential Ownership Made Easy) announced plans to build a two-story apartment complex for low-income people at 32 North Voluntario Street. A neighborhood group, Las Casitas del Este, was organized to stop the project; it objected to the architectural design as well as the structure's proposed low-income family orientation. The group fought the project for a year but could not stop the plan.⁴⁸ While Las Casitas regarded this low-income housing project as an intrusion into their neighborhood, to other Santa Barbarans it was the result of a long-fought battle for more low-cost housing. This effort by Las Casitas illustrates the emerging division in the Eastside between the established low-income homeowners and the newcomers who crowded into the neighborhood's hastily-built rental units.

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY

The changes of the 1960s did not affect the entire Eastside. Elizabeth Street, for example, remained a quiet thoroughfare lined with tidy, small homes. Some of the long-time homeowners retired in that decade. L.S. Spencer, the black man who had built his house on that street in the 1920s, retired and began spending his time tending his garden. He had moved to the Eastside as a newlywed, raised a family, and stayed in the same home even after his children moved away.⁴⁹ He was representative of an important part of the Eastside's population; throughout its history there has been a significant core of homeowners who have not moved away from the neighborhood. They have neither the desire nor the means to live anywhere else. Like Haley Street, Elizabeth Street in the 1960s had remnants of the older generation and parts of a new one; it was a mixture of ages, ethnic groups, and lifestyles.

The new people coming to the Eastside were largely Hispanic. Thus, the number of Spanish-surnamed households on Voluntario increased from twenty-five to sixty-eight during the 1960s, and the number of Hispanic households in apartments increased from four to seventeen. Many of the Hispanics were probably new to Santa Barbara, for over half of them had not been listed in the city directory before 1960. Of the other Hispanics, most had moved from other parts of the city east of State Street, while a few had come from Goleta.⁵⁰ Many of the Eastside's new Hispanic residents were part of the wave of Mexican immigrants which entered the United States after 1950, and from 1960 on

Mexicanos formed an important part of the East-side's population. Franklin School was ill-prepared for the number of non-English speakers. Mamie Goddard, school principal in the late 1950s and early 1960s, noted that there had always been a few children in the lower grades who spoke only Spanish, but one year Franklin unexpectedly received thirty-five new students who spoke no English. The school relied on its one Spanish-speaking teacher, other bilingual students, and the Spanish-speaking janitor to communicate with the children and their families.⁵¹

Thus the school became a center of attention in the neighborhood. The afternoon PTA meetings had always attracted a portion of the residents, mainly women who did not work. It was the issues of segregation and building safety, however, that thrust Franklin School into the local news and turned some parents into politicians and public speakers.⁵² In 1966 came a new issue: Could the Franklin School building withstand an earthquake? The controversy resulted from a reinterpretation of the state's Field Act, which was passed in 1933 in order to set standards for all schools built from that point on. The Franklin School, built in 1924, had been exempt from the legislation, but in 1964 it was ruled that all schools had to meet Field Act standards. On August 16, 1966 the school board voted to close Franklin, as well as Roosevelt School near the Mission, because they failed to meet the state's minimum safety requirements.⁵³

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY

This decision drew varied reactions. To Principal Mamie Goddard it was "silly," to one park commissioner it was "a lot of bunk," and to many parents it was a real threat to their children's school. While the Board of Education debated what to do with the buildings, Franklin students attended classes in portable structures on the neighboring park property. There were many questions surrounding the issue: Were the buildings really unsafe? Could they be rehabilitated? Should the old buildings be knocked down and replaced? Should they be knocked down and not rebuilt at all? An engineer who toured the school in 1967 noted that it had "so many structural deficiencies that if a rehabilitation program [was] undertaken practically no portion of the buildings [could] remain untouched."⁵⁴ This was only one of many conflicting expert opinions that fueled the debate. In July 1967 the Board of Education solved one part of the problem by deciding to demolish both Franklin and Roosevelt.

The building problem was complicated by an issue which racked the nation in the 1960s: segregation. Franklin had a large concentration of both blacks and Hispanics.⁵⁵ Parents and teachers worried that the Board would simply use the Field Act as an excuse to close Franklin since such an action would contribute to the overall integration of Santa Barbara's schools. The fear that the school would be destroyed and not rebuilt prompted parents and teachers to organize a group called Parents for Future Educational Facilities at Franklin (PFEFF). The organization was formed when William Van Schaick,



After months of debate, Franklin Elementary School was knocked down in July 1967 because it did not meet the state's minimum safety standards. (Courtesy Santa Barbara News-Press)

the school's football coach and vice principal, warned parents that the school might be permanently closed.⁵⁶ The group, initially led by Dorothy and Floyd Keinath and its chairman Ray Calderon, wanted to build an innovative school that would attract students from throughout the city.⁵⁷ The group held the view that Franklin was already integrated, and opposed the busing of their children to another school.

In a report submitted to the Board of Education in October of 1967, the group characterized the neighborhood as "happy, trouble free." It stated that "Santa Barbara is not a community where. . .gang fights or neighborhood racial feuds exist. We have people of all races living in nearly all parts of town in harmony; why are we trying to convince the minorities that they are deprived?"⁵⁸ A former Franklin principal

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY

echoed this feeling: "I always felt these children had no sense of race until they started this idea of integration. They danced together; they worked together. I felt we had the best integrated school you ever saw."⁵⁹ The discussion about integration struck a sensitive nerve. It seemed to imply that the teachers and administrators had not done their jobs well in low-income neighborhoods like Franklin's, a suggestion which they naturally resented. Some parents reacted against the labeling of their school and neighborhood as segregated; they believed the assertion misrepresented Franklin and the Eastside. However, the statistics leave little doubt about the high minority concentration in the area.

To plan a new school, Parents for Future Educational Facilities at Franklin studied contemporary school buildings and teaching methods, and decided to push for the construction of an educational-recreational park. It would serve as both a community center and a school in order to "improve the quality of relationships between the school and the community."⁶⁰ PFEFF wanted a park, a recreation hall, and a library, as well as classrooms and the other components of a traditional school. While emphasizing facilities, it also commented on programs, requesting more English as a Second Language programs, Spanish classes for Anglo students, adult education classes in the evenings, and afternoon activities for young people.⁶¹

PFEFF members filled neighborhood homes for their meetings and dominated the PTA during the

late 1960s. Independently, the group sought grant money and corresponded with experts in the field of education. Finally, more than a year after the decision had been made to demolish the school, the Board of Education set aside money for new construction. The Franklin group, joined by parents from Lincoln School who were concerned about desegregation, was included in all phases of the Board's planning. In the end, the group essentially got the type of facility it wanted, and after 1971, over 1.5 million dollars was spent on a new Franklin School, making it by 1979 the most modern school building in the district.⁶²

While the neighborhood people pushed for educational facilities in the late 1960s, Santa Barbara Public Library's Board of Trustees planned an Eastside library, originally referred to as the Milpas branch. The plans were made despite the fact that the area's population was lower than that generally required for such a branch; it was agreed, however, that "the needs of residents, many of whom are not library users and who could realize real benefits from. . . a library tend to offset the 25,000 population requirement."⁶³ In January 1968 the trustees formally approved the project, but funding proved difficult at first. After the national shock of Martin Luther King's assassination in April 1968, however, people throughout Santa Barbara raised \$35,000 dollars to build a wing of the library in memory of the civil rights leader. After years of planning and fund raising, the library branch was completed in May of 1973.⁶⁴

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY

The city also planned a social service center on the Eastside. In August of 1966, the Park Commission had proposed that a federal grant be sought from the Department of Housing and Urban Development for a center near Franklin.⁶⁵ However, it was not until July of 1969 that the city's Community Relations Commission was authorized to conduct a survey to determine if such a center was needed. According to William Simms, then director of the commission and a local civil rights advocate, the idea was to provide the neighborhood with a one-stop social service center which would provide health care and recreational programs for all ages, as well as meals for senior citizens.⁶⁶ The Community Relations Commission's plan resembled the PFEFF proposal, but the groups fought separate battles.

The process of getting the Franklin Center launched was extremely slow; even after the need was established, the debate over funding wore on into 1974. The building of Franklin Center is an interesting case study in intergovernmental relations; its construction hinged on securing federal funds, being able to rent space to county and non-profit agencies, and obtaining land from the school district. The plans were almost stopped early in 1973 because the county was considering opening a health clinic on Cota Street rather than using Franklin Center to the extent the city had expected. Without maximum county tenancy, the city staff felt that the center would be too great a strain on the city's budget. The following year, the city delayed the plans again, this time because

of the rising construction costs. The architects simplified the plan, and the county agreed to cover almost half of the local cost. Finally, in May of 1974, ground for the center was broken, the building being dedicated a year later, on June 8, 1975 -- almost nine years after the idea was proposed. The Franklin Center originally housed county health, welfare, and probation services, as well as a variety of programs sponsored by private, non-profit organizations, such as the Community Action Commission, the Cornelia M. Moore Dental Foundation, the Neighborhood Youth Corps, and the Self-Help Foundation of the NAACP.⁶⁷ The city's largest contribution to the center was its staff time since the bulk of the funding came from the federal government and the services were mainly provided by county and non-profit agencies.



Completed in 1975, Franklin Center provides a variety of social services to the Eastside and the surrounding area.

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY

The late sixties and early seventies thus brought a new appearance and new services to the Eastside. No longer did residents have to travel downtown or as far as the County Hospital in Goleta for health care, for now it was provided at Franklin Center. Hot lunches were served at the center for senior citizens, and bilingual staff members were available to assist Spanish-speaking Eastsiders. Santa Barbara's first city-sponsored community center quickly became an integral part of the Eastside. In many ways the center was a product of the nation's mood in the 1960s, as the civil rights movement forced more governmental interest in minority neighborhoods. The Eastside, as the center of the city's Chicano and black population, was pushed into the local spotlight during that decade.⁶⁸

Housing conditions on the Eastside attracted the attention of city officials in the early 1970s and a house-by-house survey of the dwellings in the neighborhood was conducted. The massive inspection revealed the inadequacies of some Eastside dwellings. On South Voluntario, for example, a few homes had broken windows, vehicles parked in yards, faulty plumbing, and assorted electrical problems. One home suffered from a combination of all of these troubles; its kitchen floor and sink needed to be completely replaced, the front porch was collapsing, the electrical system was below the city's standards, and the house sorely needed a fresh coat of paint. These substandard dwellings on the south 200 and 300 blocks were rentals. Indeed, the survey revealed few problems with the homes further north. The substandard conditions of a

few structures continue to be documented through citizens complaints. A home reported in 1973 to need plumbing and electrical repairs was still below city standards in 1981. In fact the problems were worse: glass was missing from the windows, garbage covered the yard, and the stove was broken so that the family had to prepare meals at the fireplace.⁶⁹

In the 1970s public housing also became an issue in the Eastside. During that decade, the City Housing Authority acquired four town-house-style complexes in the neighborhood, the largest having fifteen units. The southern section of the Eastside was a prime location for public housing, because the area was already zoned for multiple dwellings, and property was relatively low-priced.⁷⁰

The Eastside has been designated as one of the city's five target areas for Community Development Block Grant (CDBG) funds, based on an evaluation of 1970 census statistics. The neighborhood was selected more because of social characteristics than the physical condition of the housing. The high concentration of low-income people and minorities, along with the overcrowded housing, qualified the Eastside as a target area (see table below). On the Eastside, block grant money has been used to install a storm drain, improve parks, and rehabilitate homes. The Eastside has received the bulk of the city's home rehabilitation loans, due to its large portion of homeowners and residential zoning. Federal regulations require that citizens have a voice in deciding how block grants are to be spent, and in Santa Barbara Neighborhood

INDICATORS USED TO DETERMINE CDBG
TARGET AREAS
(Based on 1970 census)

	Eastside (Census Tract 8)	City
Percent of Housing Built Before 1940	40	35
Percent of Housing in Need of Rehabilitation	50	30
Percent of Low-Income Families	63	40
Percent Minorities	70	27
Percent of Overcrowded Housing Units	14	5

Planning Councils have been formed in the target areas to fulfill this obligation. Thus, through the CDBG program, the city government has not only provided physical improvements to the neighborhood, but has also promoted community involvement.⁷¹

The incidence of crime in the Eastside became a growing concern in the late 1970s. This issue has kept the neighborhood in the local news and reinforced its reputation as an undesirable part of town. Reports of crime on Milpas Street, the Eastside's commercial district concerned residents. In May of 1980 the



The improvements to Sunflower Park on Mason Street were one of the projects on the Eastside paid for by Community Development Block Grant funds.

neighborhood and the city were stunned when a seventeen-year-old set a fire that gutted the Eastside Library, destroying the furniture and over half of the books.⁷² This story added to an already lengthy list of robberies and acts of vandalism, which were frequent topics of conversation in the Eastside. A few blocks away from the scorched library, the walls near the neighborhood park were marked with graffiti and the park sign was changed to read only "Eastside Hood Park" -- a name nearby residents might deem appropriate.

Crime statistics for 1979 and 1980 justified neighborhood concern. The area had the

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY

worst residential burglary problem in the city; between 1979 and 1980 the number of reported residential burglaries increased 123%, from 74 to 165. According to Richard Abney, crime analyst for the Santa Barbara Police Department, crime is a localized problem -- residents committing crimes against other residents. Despite widespread concern about the problem, police department campaigns to promote community involvement in battling the neighborhood's crime have met with little success. For instance, the police department sponsored a town meeting at Santa Barbara High School early in 1981 to discuss the crime problem of the entire Eastside, including the whole area east of State Street. About 800 residents were expected to attend the meeting, but only 70 people, at most, showed up.⁷³ Perhaps these new efforts have been crippled by the long history of poor relations between minorities and the police.

Among neighborhood people, perceptions about the extent of the Eastside's problems vary. One man on North Voluntario is constantly urged by friends to move to a more peaceful part of town, but to him the Eastside is home. He likes his house; he likes his neighbors. The poorly-maintained rental home across the street bothers him little; the students who are its current residents seem pleasant enough. If there are problems in the neighborhood, he believes they are closer to the freeway and do not concern him.⁷⁴ Others view the matter differently. They resent the presence of the poorly-cared-for rental homes and apartments, whose new residents do not stay long. The gangs, the vandalism, and

the reports of violence on nearby Milpas Street and in Ortega Park leave neighborhood people anxious about their safety.⁷⁵ To some, the changes indicate problems in the neighborhood; to others, they are problems of contemporary society; to still others they are not new at all -- they are old problems finally receiving some attention.

Socially, the Eastside underwent less drastic change in the 1970s than it had during the previous decade. Population growth slowed on Voluntario Street, for example, as few apartments were built. While the total number of households increased only slightly, the proportion of Hispanic households continued to grow. In 1979, over half of the householders on that street had Spanish surnames; since 1970 the number of Hispanic households on that street had increased by thirty, while the number of non-Hispanics had decreased by seventeen.⁷⁶ Toward the end of the decade, however, some residents noticed a new trend: the movement of young middle-class, white couples and families into the neighborhood. Although this suggestion of "gentrification" has not yet been statistically verified, observers speculate that this may be the beginning of an important shift in the Eastside's social character. Probably the most significant trend in the neighborhood's ethnic history, however, continues to be the increase in the Hispanic population.⁷⁷

The Voluntario Street Hispanics are representative of the Eastside's complex social structure. Among them are homeowners who have

lived in the neighborhood for years, and renters, who comprise the Eastside's more transient sector. In 1980 most of the homeowners were blue collar workers or retired, although one was a counselor at Santa Barbara City College and another was an assistant bank manager. South of the tidy, aging, owner-occupied homes lived many of the renters, crowded into apartments or small units behind the old homes. Among this group were the most recent arrivals from Mexico, who face the problems of coping with an English-speaking world, raising families in overcrowded and often unhealthy conditions, and surviving on their small earnings. Those in the United States without the proper documents keep a low



The 1970s was a decade of rapidly escalating housing prices. For example, this home on Alisos Street, constructed in the 1920s, was purchased for \$25,000 in 1970 and sold in 1980 for \$114,000.

profile in the community, tolerating inadequate living conditions out of their fear of deportation. Despite the services of Franklin Center and the nearby La Casa de la Raza, Eastside life has been a struggle for this more transient segment of the neighborhood. The established Chicano residents on Voluntario live in a world far removed from that of the more recent Mexican immigrants just down the road.



Historically a family neighborhood, the Eastside continues to attract households with children.

lived
who c
secto
blue
was a
and
of th
many
or s
grou
who
spea
and
on t
Sta

This example illustrates the Eastside's diversity, with homeowners and a growing portion of renters, long-time Eastside residents and newcomers, retired people and young couples. These divisions cross the neighborhood's racial lines with Anglos, Blacks and Hispanics found in each group. Importantly, there is great variation in the residents' ties to the neighborhood: for some the Eastside has been their life-long home, but for others it is just a place to live during a short stay in Santa Barbara.

What does this history indicate about the lives of working-class Santa Barbarans over the last fifty years? The physical evolution of the Eastside shows the increased reliance on apartments to house the city's low-income people. While in 1930 newcomers could buy land and build small homes, by 1960 this was no longer an option. Instead they moved into rental units tucked behind the older homes or into apartments, thus increasing residential density in the neighborhood. Clearly, until at least 1970, growth rather than deterioration was the more important theme on the Eastside. However, as the small, old homes and the hastily-built additions aged, and the number of renters increased, the condition of Eastside housing became a serious concern.

The Eastside has always been an important community for Santa Barbara's low-income families. Although the occupational structure has remained stable, the ethnic make-up of the neighborhood has gradually changed. Undoubtedly the major

social change has been the growth of the Hispanic community in the last thirty years. Within this group there has been a significant number of recent Mexican immigrants, a population common to neighborhoods in most California and Southwestern cities. An important question has become: Will the Eastside continue to be a working class neighborhood? As the old generation of Eastside homeowners passes away, will it now be replaced by middle-class families? Will the neighborhood become in fact two separate neighborhoods: a transient, low-income, predominantly Hispanic community toward the freeway, and a slightly wealthier, integrated neighborhood further north? To a certain extent, this has been the trend since 1960.

What was a working-class neighborhood in an isolated resort town is now a working-class neighborhood in a far more complex city. As the highway cut through other neighborhoods, and commercial sectors elsewhere expanded, people moved to the Eastside. As newer residential areas opened in Goleta and on the Mesa, people moved out of the Eastside, making room for new workers arriving in Santa Barbara. The Eastside remains, therefore, a neighborhood of entry, a place for working people and their families. Over the years, it has continued to be Santa Barbara's largest and most stable low-income neighborhood, playing an important role in the larger life and needs of the city.

ENDNOTES

1. "Community Survey," Franklin Elementary School, November 1979, p. 3. Personal Files of Dorothy and Floyd Keinath.
2. Interview with Geno Forner, 10 April 1981.
3. Interview with Dorothy and Floyd Keinath, 5 May 1981.
4. Robert Nelson Christian, "A Study of the Historical Development of the Santa Barbara School District," (M.S. Project, University of Southern California, 1963), pp. 101, 104. "School Construction Lagging for 17 Years, Burdens Classes," Santa Barbara News-Press (hereafter SBNP), 11 May 1942.
5. All informants agreed on this description of the neighborhood. Interviews with L.S. Spencer, 5 March 1981; Marta and Pete Tenoso, 27 February 1981; Dorothy Keinath; Geno Forner. Santa Barbara City Directory, 1925 (Santa Barbara: Santa Barbara Directory Co., 1925) and Santa Barbara City Directory, 1929-30, including Montecito (Los Angeles: Santa Barbara Directory Co., 1931) verify this settlement pattern.
6. Forner, Spencer, and Tenoso interviews.
7. City Directory, 1929-30; Interviews with Mary Ortega, 15 February 1981, Ida Cordero, 17 March 1981, Forner, Tenosos.

8. Dorothy Keinath interview, verified in City Directory, 1929-30.

9. Occupational structure derived from City Directory, 1929-30 using residents of Voluntario Street from 300 South through 400 North, following the occupational breakdown in Kenneth L. Kusmer, A Ghetto Takes Shape: Black Cleveland, 1870-1930 (Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 1976).

10. Forner, Tenoso, Dorothy Keinath, and Ortega interviews.

11. City Directory, 1929-30.

12. Forner interview.

13. Dorothy Keinath, Marta and Pete Tenoso interviews.

14. Spencer interview.

15. City Directory, 1929-30.

16. Ortega interview. Albert Camarillo, Chicanos in a Changing Society: From Mexican Pueblos to American Barrios in Santa Barbara and Southern California, 1848-1930 (Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 1979), pp. 147, 196.

Camarillo estimates that there were between 3,279 and 4,262 natives of Mexico in Santa Barbara in 1930, most of whom lived in the Lower Eastside. The town's total Chicano population (foreign- and native-born) was between 4,600 and 5,100 or between fourteen and fifteen percent of Santa Barbara's total population. This was one of the

highest concentrations of Chicanos relative to non-Chicanos in all of California (p. 197).

17. Dorothy Keinath, Forner interviews.

18. Dorothy Keinath, Forner, Spencer interviews.

19. City Directory, 1929-30. The accuracy of City Directories is always questionable, and the reliability of the directories' information on home ownership is particularly dubious, but oral interviews tend to verify the high amount of home ownership.

20. U.S. Department of Commerce, Bureau of the Census, Fifteenth Census of the United States, 1930, Vol. VI, p. 138.

21. City Directory, 1940.

22. City Directory, 1940; 1951.

23. "City's New Construction Situation Confused Picture," SBNP, 31 December 1945.

24. SBNP, 3 January 1951.

25. "Might as Well Go Ahead and Build, SBNP," 29 February 1948.

26. Floyd Keinath interview.

27. Santa Barbara, Citizens Advisory Council (Housing Committee), "Report on Housing Needs in Santa Barbara, California," 8 May 1948, p. 8.

28. "Housing Needs," p. 11. "Slum Area Razing, Public Housing Needs Brought to Focal Point with 10 Evictions," SBNP, 18 December 1949. Housing Needs reported that the City Health Department was especially concerned about 500 homes, most of them between State, Milpas, Anapamu and the Southern Pacific Right-of-Way (p. 11).

29. "Might as Well Go Ahead and Build," SBNP, 29 February 1948.

30. City Directory, 1940; 1945; 1950; 1955; 1960.

31. City Directory, 1951; 1960. Interviews with Ruby Gilbert, 17 April 1981; William Simms, 4 April 1981.

32. Keinath interview; City Directories for 1951 and 1960 verify this description.

33. Santa Barbara, Community Development Department, Land Use Controls Division, Building Permit File (hereafter Building Permit File): 316, 235, and 220 South Voluntario are examples of buildings approved during this decade.

34. Christian, p. 191. Enrollment figures are from "Vice Principal To Be Assigned to Franklin," SBNP, 4 January 1957.

35. Building Permit File: 324 and 309 South Voluntario Street.

36. Forner, Spencer interviews.

37. Ortega interview.

38. "Delay Sought in Construction of Overpass," SBNP, 14 October 1954; "Two Eastside Groups OK Overpass," SBNP, 28 January 1955.

39. N.F. Liatus to Mayor Norris Montgomery, 30 January 1951; Notice of Council Action, 8 February 1951, Franklin School Playground, 1954-1955, Parks Department File, City Clerk's Office, City of Santa Barbara.

40. Mrs. Carl Burkhardt, Franklin PTA President, to Finley MacKenzie, Superintendent of Parks, 2 March 1954, Parks Department File.

41. Mrs. Marvin Grant, Franklin PTA Secretary, to Mayor and City Council, 5 July 1954, Parks Department File.

42. Ralph T. Stevens, Acting Chairman of the Board of Park Commissioners, to Mayor and City Council, 3 August 1954; Council Action, 28 October 1954, Parks Department File.

43. Petition submitted to Mayor and City Council, 20 February 1958, Parks Department File.

44. "New Residential Era is Noted in Survey," SBNP, 12 February 1957.

45. "Planners Take Steps to Help Alleviate City's Parking Problem," SBNP, 4 January 1950. Interview with Doris Carr, 26 June 1981. Carr, a mobile home resident, confirms that these goals

have been achieved to only a limited extent. Most of the current residents are retired people, but there are some young adults. More importantly, the mobile home parks of the 1970s and 1980s constitute predominantly white enclaves in a minority neighborhood. Interview with Mary Louise Days, Planning Division, Community Development Department, City of Santa Barbara, 10 August 1981.

46. City Directory, 1960; 1970.

47. Gilbert interview.

48. Forner interview. A decade later, new opposition to the construction of multiple units on the Eastside was voiced by the school board on the grounds that more apartments would only increase Franklin's racial imbalance. "Board Opposed to New Multiples Near Franklin," SBNP, 5 May 1973.

49. Spencer interview.

50. City Directory, 1955; 1960; 1965; 1970.

51. Interview with Mamie Goddard, 23 April 1981.

52. Goddard, Keinath, and Gilbert interviews.

53. Gleola McBrien, Office of the Superintendent, Santa Barbara School Districts, "Comments and Suggestions Re Field Act Problems and Long-Range Master Planning in Santa Barbara School Districts," 20 March 1968, Personal files of Floyd and Dorothy Keinath.

54. Goddard interview; "Park Property Use OK'd," SBNP, 11 August 1966; "Building Worse than Ever, Franklin School Group Finds," SBNP, 8 March 1967.

55. Santa Barbara School Districts, Master Planning for the Future, 29 October 1969, p. 49. In 1969, 87.5 percent, or 668 of Franklin's 763 students, were from the minorities (68.4 percent Spanish-surnamed and 18.1 percent black).

56. Keinath interview.

57. "A New Philosophy at Franklin School," SBNP, 12 October 1966.

58. Parents for Future Educational Facilities at Franklin, "Report to the Board," 5 October 1967, Personal files of Floyd and Dorothy Keinath.

59. Goddard interview.

60. Santa Barbara School Districts Division of Instructional Services, "Suggestions for Franklin," 12 December 1966, Personal files of Floyd and Dorothy Keinath.

61. "Parents Group Propose a Franklin School Center," SBNP, 5 October 1966; "Innovative Center at Franklin School Devised by Parents," SBNP 25 September 1967; Keinath interview.

62. Santa Barbara School Districts, A Proposal to Close Schools in the Santa Barbara Elementary School District (15 January 1979), p. 44.

63. "Northside Library Site Urged," SBNP, 5 November 1967. Branches were also suggested for the Mesa and upper State Street.

64. "Trustees Approve Branch Libraries," SBNP, 12 January 1968; "Milpas Branch Library Sought," SBNP, May 11, 1973. According to the October 7, 1969 article the \$166,000 in construction costs was to come in equal parts from city, county, and federal money, but the federal portion was unavailable.

65. "U.S. Funds Sought for Centers Here," SBNP, 25 August 1966. The grant was to be processed through the Community Action Commission, the local coordinating agency for Lyndon Johnson's "War on Poverty."

66. Simms interview. It is difficult to determine whose idea Franklin Center was. The News-Press calls the school's plan the "Franklin Center," but Simms credits Dr. Horace McMillan, a local physician and leader of Santa Barbara's black community, with the idea. The desire for a community center, however, dates back to the 1950s.

67. "Negotiations Begin for Franklin Center," SBNP, 9 March 1973; Franklin Center a Must CRC Will Tell City Council," SBNP, 25 January 1974; "Franklin Neighborhood Center Citizen Support Group Formed," SBNP, 4 February 1974; "City May Cancel Franklin Project," SBNP, 14 April 1973; "Supervisors OK Compromise Plan for Franklin Center," SBNP, 16 April 1973; Simms interview. Franklin School Area-Facilities Area Property File, City Clerk's Office, City of Santa Barbara.

68. The Eastside was identified by the Community Action Commission as a target area for the "War on Poverty" in Santa Barbara County. Census tract 8 (which included the Eastside) and census tract 9 were second in priority to only Guadalupe in the county's anti-poverty campaign of the late 1960s. 26.9 percent of the families in census tract 8 were "poor," and only Guadalupe had residents with a lower median level of education and more "unsound" dwellings. The area was "as near to being a slum as any part of the county." Everett W. Duvall, Background for Planning the War on Poverty in Santa Barbara County, Volume I (Santa Barbara: Community Action Commission, 1966), p. 14.

69. Building Permit Files: 226, 234, 235, 312, 315, 318, and 327 South Voluntario.

70. Phone interview with Robert Pearson, Deputy Director, City Housing Authority, 8 April 1981; Santa Barbara, City Housing Authority, "Public Housing Program Overview 1978."

71. Phone interview with Trish Davey, Community Development Coordinator, Community Development Department, City of Santa Barbara, 29 June 1981. The Eastside has received the bulk of the city's home rehabilitation loans. Dave Plymouth, the program's coordinator, attributes this to the neighborhood's stability due to its large portion of homeowners and the neighborhood's residential zoning. Phone interview with Dave Plymouth, Home Rehabilitation Coordinator, Home Rehabilitation Loan Program, Community Development Department, City of Santa Barbara, 24 June 1981.

72. "Eastside Library is Guttled by Blaze: Arson Suspected," SBNP, 1 May 1980; "Henry Vasquez; Troubled Youth Faces 8 Years Confinement," SBNP, 5 March 1981.

73. Telephone interviews with Richard Abney, Crime Analyst, Santa Barbara Police Department, 23 June 1981, and Edward Aasted, Community Relations, Santa Barbara Police Department, 2 July 1981.

MAJOR CRIMES ON THE EASTSIDE

(Boundaries set at Nopal, Salinas, Highway 101 and Canon Perdido, excluding Milpas Street)

	1979	1980
Homicides	2	0
Rapes	2	5
Sexual Assaults	3	2
Armed Robbery	1	4
Strong Armed Robbery	1	0
Aggravated Assaults	13	20
CRIMES AGAINST PERSONS	22	31
Burglary		8
Commercial	12	
Residential	74	165
Automobile	14	18
Grand Theft	15	19
Vehicle Theft	17	17
CRIMES AGAINST PROPERTY	132	227
TOTAL MAJOR CRIMES	154	258

74. Forner interview.
75. Gilbert and Keinath interviews.
76. City Directory, 1970; 1979.

77. Interviews with Blas Garza, Franklin Principal, 19 April 1981; Gilbert; Keinath; Telephone interview with Don Combs, Santa Barbara Tenants Union, 24 June 1981.

SANTA BARBARA CITY COLLEGE
LIBRARY

